DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 410 427 CE 074 602

AUTHOR	Orem, Richard; Giordano, Martha; Hunsaker, Patricia
TITLE	Adult Basic Education in Illinois: Perceptions from Stakeholders and the Public. Report of the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association Task Force.
INSTITUTION	Illinois Adult and Continuing Education Association.
PUB DATE	1996-00-00
NOTE	46p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Access to Education; Administrator Attitudes; *Adult Basic Education; Adult Vocational Education; Educational Needs; *Educational Objectives; Educational Opportunities; Job Placement; Job Training; Program Effectiveness; Public Opinion; *State Programs; Statewide Planning; Student Attitudes; Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	*Illinois

ABSTRACT

In December 1992, a task force of adult educators representing the programmatic and regional diversity within Illinois was appointed to study current issues of adult basic education (ABE). It gathered data from 650 students, program staff, agency representatives, and policy makers and employers and surveyed perceptions of 800 Illinois residents. The task force held meetings at various locations and made recommendations. Major findings were as follows: the condition of ABE programs had not radically changed over the past two decades; students were still confronted by similar barriers to participation--foremost were inadequate child care and transportation; and the general public was aware that child care was a possible barrier but not as aware of transportation barriers. ABE students and program staff did not see learning ability as a major barrier for students although agency personnel did. Stakeholders agreed the purpose of ABE was to prepare adults for employment. Students expressed a great desire for improved programs that would include vocational offerings and lead to employment; students and teachers expressed a need for more technology in classrooms. The consensus was that the government was responsible for providing ABE. Stakeholders and the general public felt generally that programs were needed and were doing good work with their resources. (Appendixes contain 13 references, a list of task force members, study questions, and participant lists.) (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 410 427

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS:

Perceptions from Stakeholders and the Public

Report of the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association TASK FORCE

FALL 1996

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

CE074602

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS:
Perceptions from Stakeholders and the Public

Report of the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association
TASK FORCE
FALL 1996

Authors

Dr. Richard Orem, Professor and Chair of Faculty
Adult Continuing Education
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb

Dr. Martha Giordano, Director
Adult Basic Education Department
Belleville Area College, Belleville

Ms. Patricia Hunsaker, Director
Adult Education
St. Clair County Regional
Office of Education, Belleville

1996-97 IACEA Officers

Statewide: Executive

President: **Joyce Fritsch**

President-Elect: **Shari Crockett**

Immediate Past President: **Patricia Hunsaker**

Secretary: **Jan Broadway**

Treasurer: **Valerie Meyer**

V-Pres Regions: **Connie Yeagle**

V-Pres Divisions: **Marilyn Schmidt**

Statewide: Division Chairs

Basic and Secondary: Senior: **Larry White** Junior: **Chris Francisco**

Directed Programs: Senior: **Nanci Day-LeMaster** Junior: **Karen Putnam**

Administration: Senior: **Valorie Harris** Junior: **Scott Ebaugh**

Support Services: Senior: **Dolly Nickel** Junior: **Shirley Stevens**

Regional Directors

Region I Senior: **Pam Carpenter** Junior: **Ben Greer**

Region II Senior: **Will Leinicke** Junior: **Nancy Treadrea**

Region III Senior: **Nanci Scattergood** Junior: **Nancy Johnston**

Region IV Senior: **Pat Shedlock** Junior: **Pat Hemmett**

Region V Senior: **Nancy Tammen** Junior: **Betty Cunningham**

Committee Chairs

Audit: **Linda Svezia Daniels**

Awards: **Marilyn Schmidt**

Conference Site: **Jack Pfeiffer**

Legislation: **Colleen Dries**

Constitution-Nominations: **Patricia Hunsaker**

Finance: **Stan Shover**

Financial Assistance: **Bill Ingwersen**

Membership: **Colleen Dries**

ACE/PAC: **Al Sherline**

Consultants: **Jim Custer**
Larry Stuffle

Publications & Public Relations: **Martha Giordano**
Will Leinicke

Ordering Information

For additional copies contact:

Dr. Martha Giordano, Director
Adult Basic Education Department
Belleville Area College
2500 Carlyle Road
Belleville, IL 62221

phone: 618.235.2700 x 323
email: mgiordano@aol.com

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments/Preface		i
Executive Summary		ii
Chapter 1	Introduction	1
Chapter 2	Methodology	9
Chapter 3	Summary of Focus Groups, Interviews, Questionnaires	11
Chapter 4	Recommendations to IACEA	20
	References	23
Appendix	1-1: 1974 Task Force Recommendations	24
	1-2: 1993 Funding Task Force Members	26
	2-1: Task Force Members	27
	2-2: Questions	28
	2-3: Student Focus Groups	30
	2-4: Program Staff/Other Professionals Focus Groups	31
	2-5: Agencies/Associations	32
	2-6: Policy Makers and Employers	33
	2-7: Center for Governmental Studies: Public Opinion Laboratory Northern Illinois University	36

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Table 1: *Potential Numbers of Adults to be Served in 1990 by Ethnic distribution in IL*

Table 2: *Illinois Public School Enrollment: 1971-72 and 1990-91*

Table 3: *Public School Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Distribution*

Table 4: *Illinois Public Secondary School Dropout Rate 1990-91*

Table 5: *Results of GED Testing Program in Illinois: Comparison of 1972 and 1993*

Table 6: *Profile of Participants - State and Federal Adult Education Funds by Age and Ethnicity, FY 94*

Chapter 3

Table 7: *How many adults in your community lack basic skills?*

Table 8: *How many adults in Illinois lack basic skills?*

Table 9: *Are you aware of basic education programs?*

Table 10: *Do basic education programs provide skills?*

Table 11: *Are you aware of English instruction programs?*

Table 12: *Do English instruction programs provide skills?*

Table 13: *Should government fund adult basic education?*

Table 14: *Who else should fund adult basic education?*

Table 15: *Should government fund ESL instruction?*

Table 16: *Who else should fund ESL instruction?*

Table 17a: *Is cost of going back to school a problem?*

Table 17b: *Is transportation to classes a problem?*

Table 17c: *Is child care a problem?*

Table 17d: *Is the time classes are held a problem?*

Table 17e: *Is the location of classes a problem?*

Table 17f: *Are learning difficulties a problem?*

Acknowledgments

A thank you to **Colleen Dries**, Past President of the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association, for her foresight in commissioning the Task Force.

All members of the Task Force wish to include a special acknowledgment of **Dr. Richard Orem** and his graduate assistant, **Isabelle Sabau.** Dr. Orem's expertise in research and writing guided the study from its inception to its conclusion.

Thanks to the many entities who participated in Focus Groups, agreed to be interviewed or completed questionnaires.

A special thanks to **Nancy Webb**, **Michelle Chadeayne**, **Donna Biffar**, **Phil O'Donnell**, **Carol Young**, and the staff of the Graphics and Print Department of Belleville Area College.

Preface

In December of 1992 the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association (IACEA) Executive Board authorized President Colleen Dries to appoint a Task Force to study adult basic education. At its first meeting, Task Force members agreed to approach their study by gathering information from stakeholders—students, program staff, representatives of agencies, policy makers and employers, and the public.

Recommendations resulting from a preliminary analysis of the data were presented to the IACEA Board in March 1995.

This report is presented to the IACEA membership, not only as a fulfillment of the Task Force assignment, but also as a fulfillment of organization's purpose:

"To work for the improvement of adult and continuing education standards in the State of Illinois;" and "To promote research in adult and continuing education, disseminate research findings, and encourage the use of new knowledge."

Executive Summary

In December of 1992, the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association's Executive Board authorized President Colleen Dries to appoint a Task Force to study current issues of adult education in the state. Ms. Dries appointed adult educators representing the programmatic and regional differences within the state.

At their first meeting, Task Force members decided to seek input from stakeholders and from the public in order to gather information on the needs of the field. The Task Force was able to gather data from 650 students, program staff, agency representatives, and policy makers and employers because of the cooperation of ABE programs and other entities throughout the state.

The Task Force contracted with the Public Opinion Laboratory of Northern Illinois University to survey 800 Illinois residents regarding their perceptions.

The Task Force held meetings at a variety of locations and in July of 1993 and March of 1994 published a "Task Force Update" for the membership. In March of 1995, the Task Force formulated recommendations based on the research and submitted them to the IACEA Executive Board.

The following is a synopsis of the major findings of the Task Force.

The condition of adult basic education programs has not radically changed over the past two decades. Students are still confronted by similar barriers to participation—foremost are inadequate child care and transportation. The Public Opinion Laboratory survey revealed that the general public is cognizant that child care is a possible barrier; however, the public is less aware that transportation is a significant barrier.

There are some differences in perception regarding the ABE eligible population. ABE students and program staff do not see learning ability as a major barrier for students; however, agency personnel see the lack of learning ability as a major barrier in their clientele who are ABE eligible.

There is significant agreement among stakeholders that the purpose of ABE is to prepare adults for employment, and students expressed a great desire to have improved programs that will include vocational offerings and lead to employment. Students and teachers expressed a need for more technology in classrooms.

There is also a consensus that it is the government's responsibility to provide ABE.

Stakeholders in public education, including policy makers and employers, generally feel that programs are needed and are doing good work with their resources.

For the first time, IACEA has learned from the Public Opinion Laboratory telephone survey that the general public shares that view. Program administrators have documentation of the value of educating their communities about their programs. The more the public knows about the adult education program, the more likely it is to support its funding. At the very least, the study results support continued public funding of adult basic education.

Chapter 1

Introduction

"A fundamental goal of the People of the State is the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capacities."

Article X, Section 1; The Constitution of the State of Illinois; ratified by the people; December 5, 1970

"If we are serious about adult and continuing education, then let us focus our attention on the community and its needs. Let us begin the arduous task of laying the foundation for an enduring educational system which is relevant enough, flexible enough, efficient enough, and human enough to meet the continually changing demands of a complex and relentlessly advancing society."

Dr. Michael J. Bakalis; Superintendent of Public Instruction; October 20, 1972

"By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship."

Goal Five, Goals 2000: 1994

In 1972, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Michael J. Bakalis, announced the formation of a statewide Task Force on Adult and Continuing Education. He gave the Task Force the following charge:

1. **Recommending statutory amendments** to the School Code of Illinois consistent with Article X of the Illinois Constitution.

2. **Determining the cost** to fully fund a system of free foundation level education in Illinois.

3. **Recommending legislation** to establish such a system.

4. **Conducting a needs assessment** to determine the feasibility of including the cost of adult education through the secondary level in a revised school aid formula.

5. **Fashioning an overall strategy** to coordinate adult education in Illinois.

Members of the Task Force worked for over a year to prepare their recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. They were submitted in 1974. (For a list of those recommendations, see Appendix 1-1.) Some of those recommendations were subsequently implemented and have helped shape current adult basic education programs in Illinois.

Nearly twenty years after the first Task Force on Adult and Continuing Education in Illinois completed its report, the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators' Association (IACEA) board authorized the association president to appoint a new task force.

The charge to the 1993 Task Force was "to review long range plans addressing the goal of a citizenry of literate, lifelong learners; funding of adult education; student access to adult education; programmatic and fiscal accountability and assessment systems for adult education; adult education delivery systems, and other issues that are related to providing a comprehensive adult education system in our state." (Dries, 1992)
The following is the report of the 1993 Task Force.

Background

The population eligible for publicly funded adult basic education (ABE) programs in Illinois are those who: (1) have limited proficiency with English because it is their second language, (2) have a reading grade level of 9.0 - 12.9 but lack high school completion or its equivalent, or (3) lack basic skills in reading and writing (literacy skills) as indicated by a reading grade level of 0.0 to 8.9.

ABE programs have traditionally offered GED, literacy, English as a second language, and vocational classes as well as support services (such as child care and transportation) to the population.

In order to picture the enterprise of adult education in Illinois in the 1990's, it is helpful to examine a variety of factors: demographics of the state, demographics of target groups, definitions of "functional literacy," factors influencing participation in adult education, and adult education funding.

Demographics and the Need for Adult Education

Functional Literacy Levels

One factor impacting the field of adult basic education is the number of adults who lack a level of education which the society deems necessary for successful living; this level is often called "functional literacy." In 1970, the generally accepted standard for functional literacy was completion of a high school education or its equivalent (most commonly the General Educational Development Certificate or GED).

According to the 1970 Census, 3,229,556 Illinois adults (44%) age 18 and over had left school without a high school diploma.

In the 1990 Census (Table l), 1,810,286 Illinois adults (24.3%) 18 and over had left school without a high school diploma. This decrease in the number of dropouts indicates that Illinois schools raised educational levels over this twenty year period; however, there is general agreement that the standard for functional literacy rose in the meantime, i.e., high school completion was no longer a sufficient indicator of the ability to function effectively:

> "In recent years, our society has grown more technologically advanced and the roles of formal institutions have expanded. As this has occurred, many have argued that there is a greater need for all individuals to become more literate and for a larger proportion to develop advanced skills." (Jenkins and Kirsch, 1994)

Ethnicity and Race

Table 1
Potential Numbers of Adults to be Served in 1990 by Ethnic Distribution in Illinois

	Total # of persons age 18 & older	Total # of persons age 18 & older w/o high school diploma	Percent
White (non-Hispanic)	5,562,563	1,098,385	19.7%
Black (non-Hispanic)	1,121,758	386,391	34.4%
Amer. Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	14,871	4,410	29.7%
Asian, Pacific Islander	200,245	32,078	16.0%
Hispanic	542,941	289,022	53.2%
Total	**7,452,378**	**1,810,286**	**24.3%**

Another factor impacting the field is the growth of minority groups and the proportion of these groups within ABE target populations. As with the population of the Midwest region and the entire United States, Illinois' population has become more racially and ethnically diverse since 1970. This diversity is reflected in public school enrollments (Table 2). From 1971-72 to 1990-91, the overall public school enrollment in Illinois **declined** by nearly 25%. However, the percentages of enrollment of some ethnic groups **increased**. (Table 3).

Table 2
Illinois Public School Enrollment: 1971-72 and 1990-91

	1971-72*	1990-91	% change
Elementary (K-8)	1,678,517	1,270,589	-24.3%
Secondary (9-12)	695,142	511,290	-26.4%
Total (K-12)	**2,373,659**	**1,781,879**	**-24.9%**

*The peak year for total Illinois public school enrollment.

Table 3
Public School Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Distribution

	1980-81		1990-91	
	# Students	Percent	# Students	Percent
White (non-Hispanic)	1,411,778	71.1%	1,193,858	65.6%
Black (non-Hispanic)	413,809	20.9%	396,087	21.8%
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Nat.	2,226	0.1%	2,275	0.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	30,815	1.6%	49,782	2.7%
Hispanic	124,835	6.3%	179,405	9.8%
Total	**1,983,463**	**100.0%**	**1,821,407**	**100.0%**
Total % Minority Students		**28.8%**		**34.4%**

For example, from 1980-81 to 1990-91, the percentage of White non-Hispanic students in Illinois schools decreased from 71.1% to 65.6%. Although Black non-Hispanics decreased in absolute numbers, their percentage of the total enrollment actually increased from 20.9% to 21.8%.

Hispanic enrollment increased both in absolute numbers and in percentages—from 6.3% to 9.8% and from 124,835 to 179,405.

For the population as a whole, the *Chicago Tribune* (Garza, 1995) reported that from 1980 to 1990, the greatest population increases for the 10-state Midwestern region occurred among non-White populations. Illinois' most significant increase was among Hispanics, at 268,844 (42%).

Table 1 reveals that educational attainment is unequally distributed among population groups. The groups with the highest percentage of adults without a high school diploma are Black non-Hispanics (34.4%); American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts (29.7%); and Hispanics (53.2%).

The only groups with a percentage lower than the statewide average rate of 24.3% are White non-Hispanics (19.7%) and Asian and Pacific Islanders (16.0%). Furthermore, although the median school year completed for all adults exceeded 12 years

(12.6); for Blacks and Hispanics, the median school year completed was less than 12.0.

In 1990-91, the total number of dropouts from all secondary schools in Illinois was 32,096, an annual rate of 6.3% (Table 4).

Table 4
Illinois Public Secondary School Dropout Rate* 1990-91

	Male			Female			All Secondary		
	Drops	Total	%	Drops	Total	%	Drops	Total	%
White (non-Hisp)	8,433	177,170	4.8%	6,046	168,140	3.6%	14,479	345,310	4.2%
Black (non-Hisp)	6,340	50,944	12.4%	5,272	51,621	10.2%	11,612	102,565	11.3%
Hispanic	3,107	22,051	14.1%	2,435	20,522	11.9%	5,542	42,573	13.0%
Asian or Pacific Islan.	248	8,139	3.0%	154	7,548	2.0%	402	15,687	2.6%
Amer. Indian	32	410	7.8%	29	396	7.3%	61	806	7.6%
Totals	**18,160**	**258,714**	**7.0%**	**13,936**	**248,227**	**5.6%**	**32,096**	**506,941**	**6.3%**

Source: IL State Board of Education End-of-the-Year Report for School Year 1990-91

*This rate is comparable to the statewide percent reported in prior years.

However, Black non-Hispanics dropped out at the rate of 11.3%, while Hispanics dropped out at the rate of 13.0%. The other group displaying a higher dropout rate than the state average is American Indians at 7.6%. Both white non-Hispanics (4.2%) and Asian and Pacific Islanders (2.6%) have smaller than average dropout rates.

The growth in the number of students tested by the state's GED program between 1972 and 1993 is shown in Table 5. In this period, the number of persons tested nearly doubled, from 17,352 to 31,024.

The number of persons passing the GED increased from 11,402 to 17,229. (This is a decline in the passing rate from 66% in 1972 to 57.8% in 1993.)

Table 5
Results of GED Testing Program in Illinois: 1972 and 1993

	1972	1993	United States FY 93
Number of Persons Tested	17,352	29,824	756,645
Number of Persons Passing	11,402	17,229	488,838
Percent of Persons Passing	66%	57.8%	64.6%

Changing Definitions of Functional Literacy

Another factor important to a picture of ABE programs and a factor that has changed since the 1974 Task Force report is the definition of functional literacy. Stedman and Kaestle (1991) document this.

In 1930, the Civilian Conservation Corps defined functional literacy as "three or more years of schooling." In 1947, the Census Bureau defined it as "five or more years of schooling," then "six or more years" in 1952. In 1960, the U. S. Office of Education defined it as "eight or more years of schooling." Ten years later, the generally accepted standard became "high school completion."

In 1975 the Adult Performance Level Study ("Adult Functional Competency") funded by the U. S. Office of Education, developed a competency-based definition of functional literacy. Its significance was that for the first time, literacy was uncoupled from a "years of schooling" standard.

Today, literacy is viewed as more complex than the ability to use written and spoken language, and it is no longer assumed that a high school education guarantees that an individual is functionally literate. "Literacy" is coupled with a number of adjectives that demonstrate its increased complexity: It is linked to technology (computer literacy), general knowledge (cultural literacy), and work (workplace literacy).

Of some interest in the discussion of literacy's changing definitions is that in its 1990 report, *The Illinois Literacy Effort*, the Illinois Literacy Council's long-range planning team continued to define literacy in terms of formal schooling but recognized the movement toward variant definitions when stating:

"Ninth grade functioning is being recommended for Illinois Secretary of State literacy funding purposes. However, people interviewed by the team expressed the need for competency-based methods of determining literacy." (p. 5)

The 1991 National Adult Literacy Act defined literacy as "...an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential." (Public Law 102-73, Sec. 3, National Literacy Act of 1991)

This definition expanded the concept of literacy to include more than reading and writing.

The Educational Testing Service's study of literacy in America, the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) (1993), a comprehensive look at literacy in the United States, took the definition of literacy from the National Adult Literacy Act: "... using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential." (p. 2)

Participation in Adult Basic Education

According to the National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs Second Interim Report (1993), about 1.8 million new clients enroll in ABE programs nationwide each year. This is 4 percent of the esimated target population of 46.2 million adults. (p. i.)

Participation in Illinois' publicly funded adult education programs has increased in the past two decades. Both the number of students and number of programs have grown. In FY73, 33,288 participants were served by 82 programs funded by the Federal Adult Education Act. In FY94, the number of participants in Illinois' 102 state and federally funded adult education programs had increased to 125,927. (See Table 6 for a distribution of FY94 participants by age, gender, and ethnicity.)

Table 6
Profile of Participants - State & Federal Adult Education Funds by Age & Ethnicity, FY 94

			Age Groups					
Ethnicity	**% of Total***	**Sex**	**16-20**	**21-24**	**25-44**	**45-59**	**60+**	**Total**
Asian or	7%	M	432	527	1,520	511	312	3,302
Pacific Islan.		F	366	563	3,252	904	405	5,490
Native Amer.	0.4%	M	73	55	128	13	6	275
		F	54	33	149	20	9	265
Black	21%	M	3,763	2,812	6,179	749	197	13,700
		F	3,271	2,107	6,368	1,058	293	13,097
Hispanic	38%	M	5,698	6,603	11,137	1,177	259	24,874
		F	4,032	4,545	11,838	1,814	341	22,570
White	34%	M	4,982	2,335	6,464	1,942	1,213	16,936
		F	5,100	3,368	11,477	3,420	2,053	25,418
Total	100%	M	14,948	13,332	25,428	4,392	1,987	59,087
		F	12,823	10,616	33,084	7,216	3,101	66,840
		All	27,771	22,948	58,512	11,608	5,088	125,927

*All figures greater than 1% are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Source: FY94 IL Adult Education and Literacy Annual Report

The (Illinois) State Adult Literacy Survey (SALS, 1993) examined reasons for both participation and non-participation in adult education programs and determined that participants enroll for a variety of reasons, most often for greater employability and enhanced job skills. The National Evaluation of Adult Programs Second Interim Report (1993) reported that of 21,059 adult education enrollees surveyed, 59% were not working. (p. i)

Nonparticipants cited lack of time or interest (42%), inability to pay (17%), inconvenient schedule (14%), lack of information (3%), lack of child care (4%), and lack of transportation (2%) as the more important reasons for not enrolling in a course or training program. (SALS, p. 85)

Funding of Adult Education in Illinois

Over the past two decades, funding for adult education in Illinois has increased. The major portion has been from federal sources. In 1973, $2,266,708 supported 33,288 participants in 82 programs—90% from the federal Adult Education Act and 10% from a state appropriation.

In FY94, programs served 125,927 students in 109 programs. Total expenditures for adult education reached $28,605,300 from the following sources:

Federal Funds	$10,600,000
State Match	1,159,900
Public Assistance Funds	9,812,200
State Funds	7,027,200

According to the *Illinois Adult Education and Literacy Annual Report*, 1994 funds were spent for the following:

Direct Instruction	$20,964,125	Staff Development	1,361,000
Literacy Grants	1,774,695	Special Projects	523,000
Information/Referral and Retention	1,789,210	Child Care	584,701
		Transportation	408,600

1993 Funding Task Force

In spite of the apparently significant increase in total funding for adult education in Illinois over the past 20 years, inadequate funding continues to be viewed by the adult education community as a major barrier to greater effectiveness.

In response to the issue of adult education funding, former Illinois State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Robert Leininger, in cooperation with the former Executive Director of the Illinois Community College Board, Dr. Cary Israel, appointed a Task Force on Adult Education Funding which was to develop recommendations. (See Appendix 1-2.) The Funding Task Force comprised three public school superintendents and three community college presidents.

The Task Force identified the following concerns:

1. Persistent underfunding of adult education in Illinois.
2. Providers lack knowledge of total reimbursement until the end of the year.
3. The lack of equity of funding among providers.
4. The lack of predictability in the current formula since reimbursement is based on current enrollments and actual expenditures of monies.

Central to the recommendations of the Funding Task Force was the adoption of "An Adequacy Model for Adult Education" which could serve to provide the necessary future full funding of adult education, a key recommendation of the 1974 Task Force as well.

In Summary

Over the preceding 20 years, the racial and ethnic make-up of the Illinois population has changed. Members of ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented in adult basic education target groups.

Concomitantly, the level of education needed by a "functionally literate" person has increased. Participation in adult basic education has grown in both Illinois and the nation, but only 4% of the target population enrolled in 1993.

While funding for programs increased from 1973 to 1994, inadequate funding is generally accepted as a major barrier to program effectiveness and to reaching the state's goal of a literate and fully functioning citizenry as stipulated in the IL Constitution, state education mission statements, and in national education initiatives.

Chapter 2

Methodology

Task Force members represented program providers and other stakeholders from across the state. (See Appendix 2-1.)

At its first meeting on December 9, 1992, the Task Force determined that recommendations for the field of adult education would be most valuable if informed by perceptions of both stakeholders and the public. The Task Force formulated questions to be used in focus groups, surveys, interviews with stakeholders, and in a public opinion (telephone) survey. (See Appendix 2-2.)

Focus groups have long been a technique in market research. More recently, they have been used by social scientists to study phenomena and their effects on groups of stakeholders. This study utilized focus groups for this purpose and used Krueger's (1988) definition of focus groups as a "carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment." (p. 18)

Four groups of stakeholders were identified and provided input. Group One was Students. Forty-eight student focus groups were conducted throughout the state: 11 in rural areas and 37 in urban. These groups represented 23 ABE programs. (See Appendix 2-3.)

Of the 650 students participating, there were 161 males and 481 females. Of the 650, 300 (46.1%) reported ethnicity. Of the 300, less than 1% were Native Americans; 32 (10.6%) were Hispanic; 32 (10.6%) were Black; 214 (71.6%) were White; 19 (6%) were Asian. 159 males reported age: 51 (32%) were 16 to 20; 24 (15%) were 21 to 24; 62 (39%) were 25-44; 16 (10%) were 45 to 59; 6 (3%) were age 60 and older.

360 (74.8%) females reported age: 45 (12.5%) were 16 to 20; 57 (15.8%) were 21 to 24; 200 (55.5%) were 25 to 44; 47 (13%) were 45 to 59; 11 (3%) were age 60 and older.

Of the 650 students, 81 (12.4%) reported that English was not their first language.

Group Two, Program Staff, was the next group of stakeholders to participate in focus groups. Eight groups were conducted in 7 ABE programs; 3 were conducted at regional meetings (one in northern IL, one in central IL, and one in southern IL). One group was conducted at an Area Planning Council meeting. (See Appendix 2-4.)

Participants included teachers; counselors; recruitment and retention staff; family, community, and volunteer literacy staff; and program directors, as well as Illinois Department of Public Aid Project Chance staff.

Group Three, Agency Representatives, included (1) employees of public agencies that serve the ABE eligible population and (2) staff members of professional organizations that represent employees of agencies that serve the ABE eligible population.

Thirteen agency groups provided information: two through focus groups and 22 through surveys. (See Appendix 2-5.)

Group Four (Policy Makers and Employers) were interviewed by Task Force members and other adult education professionals. (See Appendix 2-6.)

A total of 35 interviews were conducted with 8 employers; 8 State Representatives; 4 State Senators; 2 candidates for State Representative; and 13 locally elected officials.

In addition to the four groups of stakeholders providing information, in the fall of 1994, the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association contracted with the

Center for Governmental Studies of Northern Illinois University to sponsor a block of questions as part of the Illinois Policy Survey, an annual survey since 1984. (See Appendix 2-7.)

Data were collected by the Public Opinion Laboratory (POL) under the direction of Associate Director, Dr. Janet McConeghy. POL interviewers spent almost 300 hours talking with 800 residents of Illinois, aged 18 and older, and recording their conversations. (Dran, p. 3)

The survey was conducted from October 6 to November 7, 1994. The Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewer (CATI) technique was used in a central polling site with supervisors monitoring the interviewers. The CATI technique allows computer data entry during the interview and provides automatic branching of questions and checks for errors.

The Illinois Policy Survey uses a disproportionately stratified sample design, with the sample divided into six regions: Chicago; the balance of Cook County; the collar counties of DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will; northern Illinois; central Illinois; and southern Illinois. Approximately 200 respondents are chosen from Chicago and approximately 120 respondents from each of the remaining five regions.

This design assures cell sizes large enough to make regional comparisons. To permit statements about opinion in the entire state, the file is weighted to reflect the proportionate sizes of each region.

Data are also weighted to restore equal probability of selection. The formula used includes an adjustment for the number of adults in the household.

Because telephone samples tend to oversample women and middle-aged individuals, an adjustment is also made to match gender-age combinations as documented by the 1990 census. The weighted sample is adjusted back to the actual sample size.

Households contacted came from a random list of telephone numbers in Illinois purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc. At each residence that had eligible respondent(s), the respondent was selected randomly. If the selected respondent was unavailable, a callback was arranged. Substitution was not allowed. Up to five callbacks were made in an attempt to reach selected respondents.

The combined result of these procedures is a representative statewide sample of the English-speaking adult population in Illinois that is accessible by telephone.

Sampling error for a sample of 800 individuals is plus or minus 3.5 percent. This means that 95 times out of 100, results of the poll can be expected to fall within 3.5 percent of what we would find if during the same time period all English-speaking adults in Illinois in households with a telephone were interviewed.

Sampling error among subgroups (e.g., gender, region) will exceed 3.5 percent and will vary with the size of each group. In addition to sampling error, any survey contains unknown levels of error from other sources, such as question wording or question order, respondent misunderstandings, and other practical difficulties of measuring public opinion (Dran, p. 16). Telephone interview questions were developed by the IACEA Task Force after conducting the focus groups, surveys, and interviews among Groups One through Four.

Chapter 3

Focus Group, Interview, and Questionnaire Results

This chapter summarizes the information gathered through focus groups, surveys, personal interviews, and telephone interviews.

Group One (Students) and Group Two (Program Staff) revealed perceptions about the issues impacting students who enroll in programs. Because only 4% of the population eligible for ABE services enrolls each year, (National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs, Second Interim Report, p. i.), students cannot be assumed to report perceptions of the entire ABE population. The fact they enrolled demonstrates they either have overcome or did not face prohibitive barriers to enrollment. Program Staff also are reporting their perceptions of students, not the entire population eligible for ABE.

On the other hand, Group Three (Agency Representatives) and Group Four (Policy Makers and Employers) are reporting their perceptions about the ABE eligible population, some of whom may be enrolled in classes.

Students cited economic conditions as their problems and causes of their problems more often than any other. From greatest to least, they reported child care, transportation, poverty, lack of jobs, unemployment, and a lack of money for GED Tests to be problems.

Program Staff also frequently mentioned their students' economic conditions. They cited child care, transportation, poverty, and money for GED Testing as student problems.

Agency Representatives likewise reported that the greatest issue affecting the ABE population is economic: specifically, lack of jobs, need for social services, and lack of job skills. Lack of child care and lack of transportation were mentioned, but not emphasized. They stated that the major purpose of education is to facilitate employment.

Policy Makers and Employers overwhelmingly identified a lack of employment as the major problem facing the ABE population. They also overwhelmingly supported the idea that the purpose of adult education is to make adults employable.

Students want changes in their ABE programs. After economic problems, curriculum issues received the second most frequent number of citations including their wanting more varied classes and a better curriculum. Students specifically indicated a desire for more vocational programming; they want job training, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, cooperative education, and job shadowing.

Agency Representatives cited a need for more programming. The curricular areas they cited as most desirable to continue were ABE/literacy, followed by GED, vocational, and ESL.

Again indicating a desire for improved programs, Students gave their third greatest emphasis to lack of teaching and counseling staff as problems. Program Staff also cited a lack of staff when they discussed their challenges in dealing with students who vary greatly in ages, needs, and abilities. Program Staff emphasized that programs need more job placement counselors.

Another program area Students would like improved is that of equipment and materials. This area received the next greatest number of citations. In particular, students want computers and technology.

After the citations regarding their economic conditions and their desire for improved curriculum (vocational programming), increased staff, and improved equipment and materials, Students gave attention to personal characteristics as problems.

They noted low self-esteem, the stigma of attending an adult school, and their inability to manage their lives so that they could attend school. They also mentioned fear of school, fear of being too old to return to school, personal stress level, and family problems. Program Staff reported that students' lack of self esteem, poor physical and mental health, and lack of family support are problems.

Agency Representatives likewise cited personal characteristics such as fear of school, lack of self esteem, and lack of goal setting abilities as problems for the ABE-eligible population. They also identified societal issues as problems and causes of problems: pregnancy, teen pregnancy, gangs, substance abuse, and family dysfunctions including the family's inability to provide a positive role model for education.

The next area of emphasis for Students was scheduling. They reported a desire for different times for class, longer class hours and/or class year, and they reported there are too few locations for classes.

Agency Representatives cited the need for changes in class scheduling to accommodate their ABE eligible clients.

Students next cited poor teaching skills, teachers' indifference and insensitivity to students, and poor classroom management as issues. Agency Representatives also cited poor teaching as a problem for their ABE eligible clients.

In terms of learning abilities, Students infrequently cited their own low basic skills and ability, slow academic improvement, and difficulty concentrating and remembering as problems. Students mentioned—also infrequently–their lack of time, long work hours, and fatigue as problems.

Likewise, Program Staff gave scant mention to learning abilities as problems among their students while Agency Representatives gave poor learning abilities equal emphasis with personal characteristics (such as lack of self esteem) as problems for their clients in the ABE eligible population.

Students cited various GED Test issues: These included wanting the GED Test on-site, elimination of timing, test no more difficult than high school courses, prompt return of test results, more public acceptance of GED, a desire for diplomas rather than certificates, and calculators used during the math test. Program Staff expressed a need for special testing for students with disabilities.

Students wanted the government to improve adult education by providing more funding for programs; providing grants, stipends, and incentives to students; and providing lunches and housing. Six groups mentioned a need for the government to encourage students to attend adult education and for government agencies to treat their clients with more respect.

Program Staff felt that the government could provide more funding, provide more stable funding, decrease recordkeeping requirements, have students pay part of program costs, fund programs based on performance, fund with K-12 schools, and consolidate funding from agencies.

Agency Representatives implied a need for more government support when they cited a need for increased funding, better teacher pay, and more student support services.

Thirty-three of 35 Policy Makers and Employers reported that it is mainly the government's responsibility to provide ABE services; however, 26 of the respondents said that other entities also have a responsibility: 12 identified business and industry, and 3 identified volunteers. Only one of 34 respondents to the question stated that the government should not provide support services to the adults attending ABE classes.

Seventeen of 35 Policy Makers and Employers responded that it is also the responsibility of the government to provide education and training for incarcerated adults; two additional respondents said the government is responsible, but stipulated conditions to this support. Four respondents said that it is not the government's responsibility.

One area which Students cited that was not mentioned by Program Staff was the area of mandating participation. They expressed the opinion that others in the ABE eligible population would participate more effectively if they were mandated by the government and if they refused to participate, punishment would be effective in remedying the lack of participation and achievement.

They wanted to "require students receiving public assistance or unemployment" to get their GED. Punishments for non-compliance included "discontinue public assistance for dropouts," "send dropouts to military or Job Corps," "deny drivers licenses to dropouts under 18," and "have time limits for completing GED."

Program Staff did not specify compulsory or punitive measures; Agency Representatives gave only minimal citation to a need for coercive measures.

Both Agency Representatives and Policy Makers and Employers reported that beyond the primary purpose of attaining employment, the second most important purpose of education is to fulfill broader purposes such as benefiting society, improving communication and mental health, and transmitting the culture. The third most often mentioned purpose by both groups was that of attaining basic education skills (reading, writing, and math).

Agency Representatives were queried as to their knowledge of local adult basic education programs, services, and providers. They identified 78 programs; the largest single type of provider identified was community colleges (25). The type of service most often identified was GED, followed by adult basic education and literacy; the third was ESL. The most often reported support services were career and other counseling services, child care, and transportation.

When asked what services they would like to see continued, Agency Representatives indicated adult basic education and literacy, GED, and ESL. They want to have career counseling, child care, and transportation continued as support services for their clients.

Policy Makers and Employers identified 66 programs. There were 18 interviewees who reported either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with known programs. Of these 18, 17 reported satisfaction, and five added that they would like more programming. One respondent expressed dissatisfaction, stating a needed change is to have more workplace programming.

Program Staff cited frustration at poor student attendance and retention, and they want lobbying, professional development opportunities, promotion of the profession, research, and leadership in improving programs from their professional association.

Agency representatives reported a perception that more cooperation and collaboration among agencies would benefit the ABE eligible population.

Illinois Policy Survey Results

The following tables display the results of the 800 interviews completed by NIU's Center for Governmental Studies as part of its annual statewide policy survey focusing specifically on the questions measuring the general public's perception of the need for and the effectiveness of adult basic education programs in Illinois.

Question 1

Thinking about adults age 18 and over in your community, about how many do you think lack skills in basic reading and writing that they need for jobs and everyday living?

Table 7
How many adults in your community lack basic skills?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
A lot	182	22.7%	22.7%
Some	341	42.6%	65.3%
Hardly any	242	30.2%	95.5%
Won't answer	4	.5%	96.0%
Don't know	32	4.0%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Question 2

How about Illinois as a whole? About how many adults do you think lack skills in basic reading and writing that they need for jobs and everyday living?

Table 8
How many adults in Illinois lack basic skills?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
A lot	302	37.7%	37.7%
Some	405	50.7%	88.4%
Hardly any	36	4.4%	92.8%
Won't answer	6	.8%	93.6%
Don't know	52	6.4%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Discussion

Respondents tended to think of their community as having fewer members lacking basic reading and writing skills than the state as a whole has. They agree there is a problem, but believe it exists somewhere else to a greater extent than in their own community.

Question 3

Do you know of any programs in your community that provide basic education in reading and writing skills for adults?

Table 9
Are you aware of basic education programs?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Yes	383	47.8%	47.8%
No	396	49.5%	97.4%
Won't answer	1	.1%	97.5%
Don't know	20	2.5%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Question 4

From what you know of these programs, do you think they provide the basic skills in reading and writing that these people need?

Table 10
Do basic education programs provide skills?

Response	Frequency	%	Adjusted %	Cum %
Yes	319	39.9%	83.4%	83.4%
No	7	.9%	1.9%	85.3%
Won't answer	1	.1%	.2%	85.5%
Don't know	55	6.9%	14.5%	100.0%
Not asked	417	52.2%	Missing	
Total	**800**	**100.0%**		

Discussion

Of the 383 respondents to question 3 who indicated some knowledge of programs in their community that provide basic literacy instruction for adults, 319 (83.4%) said they think these programs provide the basic skills in literacy that the adults need.

Question 5

Do you know of any programs in your own community that provide basic instruction in English as a second language for non-English speaking adults?

Table 11
Are you aware of English instruction programs?

Response	Frequency	%	Adjust %	Cum %
Yes	285	35.7%	35.7%	35.7%
No	478	59.7%	59.7%	95.4%
Won't answer	1	.1%	.1%	95.5%
Don't know	36	4.5%	4.5%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	

Question 6

From what you know of these programs, do you think they provide the basic skills in English that these people need?

Table 12
Do English instruction programs provide skills?

Response	Frequency	%	Adjust %	Cum %
Yes	231	28.9%	80.9%	80.9%
No	10	1.2%	3.4%	84.3%
Won't answer	1	.2%	.5%	84.8%
Don't know	44	5.4%	15.2	100.0%
Not asked	515	64.3%	Missing	
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	

Discussion

Of the 285 respondents who indicated some knowledge of English as a second language programs for adults in their community, 231 (80.9%) said they think these programs provide the basic skills in English that the adults need.

Question 7

Do you think the government should provide funding for programs in reading and writing skills to adults who do not have these skills?

Table 13
Should government fund adult basic education?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Yes	581	72.6%	72.6%
No	187	23.4%	96.0%
Won't answer	7	.8%	96.8%
Don't know	25	3.2%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Question 8

Who else do you think should fund these programs?

Table 14
Who else should fund adult basic education?

Response	Frequency	%	Adjust %	Cum %
No one	15	1.9%	8.2%	8.2%
Users	84	10.6%	45.1%	53.4%
Employers	9	1.2%	5.0%	58.3%
Schools	13	1.6%	6.9%	65.2%
Volunteers	9	1.1%	4.8%	70.0%
Other	37	4.6%	19.7%	89.7%
Don't know	19	2.4%	10.3%	100.0%
Not asked	613	76.6%	Missing	
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	

Question 9

Do you think the government should provide funding for programs in English as a second language to adults who do not have these skills?

Table 15
Should government fund ESL instruction?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Yes	481	60.2%	60.2%
No	290	36.2%	96.4%
Won't answer	6	.8%	97.2%
Don't know	23	2.8%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Question 10

Who else do you think should fund these programs?

Table 16
Who else should fund ESL instruction?

Response	Frequency	%	Adjust %	Cum %
No one	19	2.4%	6.7%	6.7%
Users	144	18.0%	49.8%	56.5%
Employers	10	1.2%	3.4%	60.0%
Schools	11	1.4%	3.8%	63.8%
Volunteers	13	1.6%	4.5%	68.3%
Other	57	7.1%	19.7%	88.0%
Don't know	35	4.3%	12.0%	100.0%
Not asked	510	63.8%	Missing	
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	

Discussion

Of the 800 respondents, 581 (72.6%) said that the government should provide funding for literacy programs, and only 187 (23.4%) said no. Public support for ESL programs, though not as high as for adult basic education, is still affirmed by 481 (60.2%) respondents. Among those who suggested alternative sources for program support, the largest response rate for both adult basic education and ESL programs is for increased user support of these programs. But this was reflected by fewer than 20% of the respondents.

The last question tried to determine how the general public views the various barriers facing adult learners in ABE programs. Survey respondents were asked their opinion of program cost, transportation, child care, class scheduling, class location, and general learning difficulties faced by these adult learners.

Question 11

Adults who need to learn basic reading and writing or English as a second language often face problems with going back to school. I'll read you a list of possible problems, and for each one, please tell me if you think it is generally a serious problem, a minor problem, or not much of a problem for these people.

Table 17a
Is cost of going back to school a problem?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Serious	490	61.3%	61.3%
Minor	223	27.8%	89.1%
No problem	74	9.2%	98.3%
Won't answer	4	.5%	98.9%
Don't know	9	1.1%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Table 17b
Is transportation to classes a problem?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Serious	179	22.4%	22.4%
Minor	428	53.5%	75.9%
No problem	165	20.6%	96.5%
Won't answer	5	.6%	97.1%
Don't know	23	2.9%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Table 17c
Is child care a problem?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Serious	496	62.0%	62.0%
Minor	223	27.8%	89.8%
No problem	50	6.2%	96.0%
Won't answer	5	.7%	96.7%
Don't know	26	3.3%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Table 17d
Is the time classes are held a problem?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Serious	120	15.0%	15.0%
Minor	379	47.3%	62.3%
No problem	256	32.0%	94.3%
Won't answer	5	.6%	95.0%
Don't know	40	5.0%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Table 17e
Is the location of classes a problem?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Serious	77	9.7%	9.7%
Minor	397	49.7%	59.4%
No problem	276	34.5%	93.9%
Won't answer	4	.5%	94.4%
Don't know	45	5.6%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Table 17f
Are learning difficulties a problem?

Response	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Serious	335	41.9%	41.9%
Minor	281	35.2%	77.1%
No problem	111	13.9%	91.0%
Won't answer	12	1.5%	92.5%
Don't know	60	7.5%	100.0%
Total	**800**	**100.0%**	

Discussion

According to the 800 telephone survey respondents, both child care (62%) and the cost of returning to school (61.3%) are the two most serious problems confronting adults.

After child care and costs of school, the respondents judged learning difficulties (41.9%) to be the greatest barrier for adults returning to basic education programs. Transportation (22.4%) was considered a serious problem by fewer than a quarter of the general population.

Class location (9.7%) and class schedules (15.0%) were considered serious problems by fewer respondents.

Summary

The condition of adult basic education programs has not radically changed over the past two decades. As students revealed in focus groups, they are still confronted by similar barriers to participation—foremost are inadequate child care and transportation. The POL survey revealed that the general public is cognizant that child care is a barrier; however, the public is less aware that transportation is a significant barrier.

There are some differences in perception regarding the ABE eligible population. ABE students and program staff do not see learning ability as a major barrier for students; however, agency personnel see the lack of learning ability as a major barrier in their clientele who are ABE eligible.

There is a great deal of agreement that the purpose of ABE is to prepare adults for employment, and students expressed a great desire to have improved programs that will include vocational offerings and lead to employment. Students and teachers expressed a need for more technology in classrooms.

There is a consensus among policy makers and employers who were interviewed that it is the government's responsibility to provide ABE.

Stakeholders in public education, including policy makers and employers, generally feel that programs are needed and are doing good work with their resources.

For the first time, IACEA has learned from the POL telephone survey that the general public shares that view. Program administrators now have documentation of the value of educating their communities about their programs: The more the public knows about the adult education program, the more likely it is to support its funding.

At the very least, the study results support continued public funding of adult basic education.

Chapter 4

Recommendations

Based on its extensive data collection and analysis, the Task Force recommends the following to the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association Executive Board. It is hoped that these recommendations will serve to stimulate discussion among the members of the Association and among the members of the Illinois adult education community as they face the challenges confronting them now, in the future, in their work and in their communities.

Professional Standards

In recognition of the need for adult education to take its rightful place as a full-time profession equal to other segments of the education arena, including elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education:

1. IACEA should appoint a task force comprised of representatives from institutions of higher education and adult education programs to implement standards for the profession.
2. IACEA should actively support full-time employment opportunities for instructors and support staff.

These recommendations are supported by comments made by students and staff in focus groups and by the Task Force on Adult Education Funding.

Legislation and Funding

In recognition of the need for more adequate and secure funding:

3. IACEA should systematically educate policy makers as to the appropriate roles of adult education.
4. IACEA should educate policy makers as to the level of collaboration among and between various service providers and other agencies.
5. IACEA should inform and educate its members as to the legislative process and their role in it.
6. IACEA should work with legislators to develop funding that is directly related to the expressed need for a literate citizenry and workforce and responsive to the unique characteristics of local programs from Chicago to Cairo.

These recommendations are supported by comments made by legislators in interviews, by program directors in focus groups, and by respondents to the telephone survey. Recommendation 3 of the 1974 Task Force Report specifically identified the need for "adequate state funding . . . to make possible effective local adult elementary and secondary programs."

Program Goals

In recognition of the need to establish realistic and attainable goals for adult learners:

7. IACEA should promote the need for local programs to focus on preparing learners for entry level employment and providing the "baseline" education necessary to access further education and training. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, adult education programs need to prepare adults to participate more fully in their communities and to become successful lifelong learners.

This recommendation is supported by comments from student focus groups, as well as statements of national and state education goals.

Program Promotion/Marketing

In recognition of the need to develop more public support for education programs for adults:

8. IACEA should work with local programs and other key stakeholders to develop promotional and marketing strategies to inform local communities and policy makers. Strategies could include advertising.

This recommendation is supported by responses to the statewide telephone survey, as well as comments by legislators in individual interviews, and comments by students and staff in focus groups. A well-informed public tends to be a supportive public.

Language Diverse Populations

In recognition of the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of adults in Illinois:

9. IACEA should collaborate with other professional associations with an interest in language diverse populations. Collaboration could take the form of joint sponsorship of conferences and publications.

10. IACEA should develop short and long range plans for more effective service to professionals who provide programs to these special populations, such as:

    - citizenship programs, for those who desire more complete assimilation into the mainstream community.
    - family literacy programs, for those who would benefit from cross generational programs of instruction.
    - bilingual vocational programs, for those who require improved language and job skills necessary for successful transition into the economic mainstream.

These recommendations are supported by changing demographics of the state and by comments from student and staff focus groups.

Technology

In recognition of the increasing role of technology in the school, the home, and the workplace:

11. IACEA should encourage greater learning technologies, to increase access to professional development activities throughout the state and the nation.

12. IACEA should promote continuing preparation of professional staff in the uses of technology as a teaching tool so that they may more effectively apply such technologies in their classrooms.

These recommendations are supported by the Illinois State Board of Education as voiced in Adult Education FY93 Annual Report, by participants in adult education programs interviewed for the State Adult Literacy Survey, and by comments of students and staff in focus groups who recognize the need to incorporate more technology in the program.

Research and Development

In recognition of the value of applied research:

13. IACEA should promote a program of continuing research, in cooperation with various state agencies and institutions of higher education, to improve the practice of teaching adults.

14. IACEA should actively disseminate research findings through position papers, journals, research reports, and conferences.

These recommendations are supported by the National and State Adult Literacy Surveys.

References

"Adult Functional Competency: A Summary," Austin, Texas: The University of Texas at Austin, 1975. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No ED 114 609)

Cross, K. Patricia (1981). Adults as Learners. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Development Associates, Inc. (1993). National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs: Patterns and Predictors of Client Attendance (Second Interim Report). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Dran, Ellen M. (1994). Illinois Policy Survey 1994. DeKalb: Center of Governmental Studies, Northern Illinois University.

Dries, Colleen (October 6, 1992). Personal Correspondence.

"State-Administered Adult Education Programs and Secretary's Discretionary Programs for Adult Education; Final Regulations." (August 18, 1989). Federal Register, 34CFR, Part 425. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

FY 1993 Illinois Adult Education and Literacy Annual Report. Springfield, IL: Illinois State Board of Education.

Garza, Melita Marie (March 7, 1995). A region's new look: Latinos flock to Mid west, make their presence felt. Chicago Tribune, Section 2, pp. 1 & 4.

Jenkins, Lynn B. and Irwin S. Kirsch (1994). Adult Literacy in Illinois: Results of the State Adult Literacy Survey. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Kirsch, Irwin S., Ann Jungeblut, Lynn Jenkins, and Andrew Kolstad (1993). Adult Literacy in America: A First Look at the Results of the National Adult Literacy Survey. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Krueger, Richard A. (1988). Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Today and Tomorrow in Illinois Adult Education (February 1974). Springfield, IL: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Stedman, Lawrence C. and Carl F. Kaestle (1991). Literacy and reading performancein the United States from 1880 to the present. In Carl F. Kaestle, et al (Eds.) Literacy in the United States: Readers and Reading since 1880. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Appendix 1-1

1974 Task Force Recommendations

Recommendation 1
LOCAL DECISION-MAKING AND FLEXIBILITY TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS SHOULD BE THE FUNDAMENTAL TENET FOR ADULT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE STATE. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS PRINCIPLE THE LOCAL AREAS RECOMMENDED ARE THE FORTY (40) COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICTS OF THE STATE.

Recommendation 2
MAXIMUM COORDINATION IS NECESSARY ON BOTH LOCAL AND STATE LEVELS. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECTIVE THE FOLLOWING PLAN IS RECOMMENDED.

(a) At the local level an area Advisory Committee of widespread membership should be established in each of the forty areas cited in #l above, and that from these committees a local operational Executive Council should be chosen. The function of these latter groups shall be to develop the programs for their respective areas, seek funding for these programs, and establish evaluation procedures for both program and finances where they are established.

(b) A similar arrangement is recommended at the State level to provide state-wide leadership, review programs submitted according to State educational and financial guidelines, and to approve acceptable proposals from the forty local areas.

Recommendation 3
ADEQUATE STATE FUNDING SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO MAKE POSSIBLE EFFECTIVE LOCAL ADULT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PROGRAMS. TO ASSURE EQUITY IN FUNDING, THE SAME AMOUNT PER STUDENT CONTACT HOUR SHOULD BE ALLOCATED FOR ALL SUCH PROGRAMS WHEREVER THEY ARE CONDUCTED IN ALL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE STATE.

Recommendation 4
SINCE THERE ARE EXCELLENT ADULT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PROGRAMS CURRENTLY IN OPERATION, A MAXIMUM EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO INSURE CONTINUANCE OF THESE HIGH QUALITY LOCAL PROGRAMS.

Recommendation 5
A THOROUGH EVALUATION PROCESS SHOULD BE BUILT INTO BOTH LOCAL AND STATE OPERATIONS IN ORDER TO INSURE THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES ARE IN OPERATION FOR EFFICIENT USE OF THE FINANCES PROVIDED FOR THESE PROGRAMS.

Recommendation 6
CATEGORICAL STATE FUNDING, AT THE RATE OF $1.75 PER STUDENT HOUR, SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO FULLY FUND ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ADULTS.

Recommendation 7
THE STATE SUPPORT SHOULD BE CATEGORICAL TO ENSURE IDENTIFICATION OF PURPOSE OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF EXPENDITURES OF FUNDS FOR APPROVED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Recommendation 8
THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT SHOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL ENOUGH TO PROVIDE INCENTIVES TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN PROGRAMS IN CONSORT WITH THE VARIED LOCAL AND STATE WIDE DELIVERY SYSTEMS ACCORDING TO A PLAN WHICH WOULD RECOGNIZE AND ALLOW FOR LOCAL AS WELL AS STATEWIDE NEEDS.

Recommendation 9
THERE SHOULD BE A GRANT OF FUNDS FOR A PERIOD OF TIME TO COVER THE COSTS OF PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS DURING THE TIME NECESSARY TO ORGANIZE AND MAKE OPERATIONAL A LOCAL SYSTEM FOR THE DELIVERY OF ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS. THIS IMPLEMENTATION GRANT SHOULD SUPPORT THE SALARY OF A DIRECTOR, CLERICAL ASSISTANT, AND OFFICE EXPENSES FOR A MAXIMUM PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

Recommendation 10
FUNDS FOR DISTRIBUTION TO LOCAL COORDINATING COUNCILS SHOULD BE BASED UPON PER PUPIL CONTACT HOURS IN APPROVED PROGRAMS OF ADULT EDUCATION.

Recommendation 11
PARTICIPATING LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES WOULD BE ACCOUNTABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE THEIR EXPENDITURES EQUALING OR EXCEEDING THE AMOUNT OF STATE SUPPORT RECEIVED, AND TO CERTIFY THAT NO OTHER SOURCE OF REVENUE HAS BEEN REQUESTED OR RECEIVED FOR PROGRAMS TO BE SUPPORTED FROM STATE ADULT EDUCATION FUNDS.

Recommendation 12
REQUESTS MAY BE MADE BY LOCAL EXECUTIVE COUNCILS FOR APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS TO PROVIDE FOR SPECIFIC RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND EXEMPLARY ACTIVITIES IN ADULT EDUCATION. STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR SUCH ACTIVITIES SHOULD NOT EXCEED 5 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL STATE APPROPRIATION FOR ADULT ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Recommendation 13
THE LANGUAGE "AND UNDER 21 YEARS" SHOULD BE DELETED FROM SECTION 10-20.12 OF THE ILLINOIS SCHOOL CODE.

Recommendation 14
THE ADULT EDUCATION ACT OF 1967 BE AMENDED TO INCORPORATE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE IN THE AREAS OF PROGRAM COORDINATION AND COSTS.

Appendix 1-2

1993 Funding Task Force Members

Steve Berry, Superintendent
Arlington Heights Public Schools
District # 214

Zerrie Campbell, President
Malcolm X Community College

Joseph Cipfl, President
Belleville Area College

Richard Fonte, President
South Suburban Community College

Robert Hill, Superintendent
Springfield Public Schools
District # 186

Margaret Hollis, Superintendent
Carbondale Public Schools
District # 165

Appendix 2-1

IACEA Task Force Members

Appointed Members

Ms. Patricia Hunsaker, Task Force Co-Chair
Director of Adult Education
St. Clair County Regional Office of Education
Belleville

Dr. Gloria Taylor, Task Force Co-Chair
Dean of Community Service
South Suburban College
South Holland

Ms. Dorothy Aguirre, Principal
Hilliard Adult Education Center
Chicago Public Schools
Chicago

Mr. Ben Greer
Director of Programmed Activities for Correctional Education
Chicago City Jails Division
Chicago

Ms. Dorothy McMurtry
Director of Basic/Continuing Education
Chicago City Colleges
Chicago

Dr. Keith Lape
Assistant to the President
MacMurray College
Jacksonsville

Dr. Martha Giordano
Director of Adult Basic Education
Belleville Area College
Belleville

Mr. John Muirhead
Director of Adult Education
Urbana School District 116
Urbana

Dr. Richard Orem
Professor and Chair of the Faculty in Adult Continuing Education
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb

Mr. Larry White
Director of Adult Education
Five County Regional Office of Education
Ullin

Ms. Nancy Varness
Director of Instructional Innovation
Illinois Central College
East Peoria

Mr. Scott Ebaugh
Director of Adult Education
Elgin Community College
Elgin

Ex-Officio Member

Ms. Colleen Dries
Teacher
Adult Education Program
Peoria Board of Education
Peoria

Appendix 2-2

Questions

A. Student Focus Groups

1. What are some of the greatest problems facing adult education students today?
2. What changes would you like to see in adult education?
3. What do you think the government should do for adults who have not finished school?
4. What do you think adult education programs should look like in 5 to 10 years from now?

B. Adult Education Staff Focus Groups

1. What are some of the greatest challenges facing adult educators in Illinois today?
2. What changes would you like to see in how adult education is funded in Illinois?
3. What do you think should be the role of IACEA in advocating for adult learners and adult educators in Illinois?
4. What would you like to see IACEA accomplish in the next five years? in the next 10 years?

C. Agency Survey Questions

1. What are some of the problems facing adults 16 and older who left school without a high school diploma or adults for whom English is not their first language?
2. What are the causes of these problems?
3. What should be the purposes of government-funded education/training for those adults over 16 who have not completed high school or adults for whom English is not their first language?
4. What free education services are provided to your clients/students or parents of your clients/students who are in the two groups above?
   a. Who provides these services?
   b. What aspects of these services would you like to have continue?
   c. What changes would you like to see in these services?
5. Are there any ways that agencies could work together more effectively to bring needed services to these adults who didn't finish high school or adults for whom English is their second language?

D. Policy Makers and Employers

1. What programs are you aware of in your area that provide education and training for adults who have not completed high school or who do not speak/write/read/English? (If the respondent is not aware of programs, go to question 2. If he/she is aware of programs, ask question 1 a.
   1a. Are you satisfied with these programs?
   1b. If not, what changes would you make?
2. What is the government's responsibility in providing education for adults without a high school diploma or adults who do not speak/read/write English? (If the respondent says government has a responsibility, ask questions 2a and 2b. If the respondent doesn't think the government has a responsibility, skip 2a and 2b and ask 2c.)

2a. Should this responsibility include supportive services such as child care, transportation, and job counseling?
2b. Is government the only group that has the responsibility to provide training for adults without a high school diploma or adults who do not speak/read/write English?
2c. If government does not have a responsibility, whose responsibility is it?
2d. What is the government's responsibility in providing education and training for incarcerated adults who lack a high school diploma or for adults who do not speak/write/read English?

3. What should be the primary purpose of education and training for adults who have not completed high school or for adults who do not speak/read/write English?

Public Opinion (Telephone) Survey

1. Thinking about adults age 18 and over in your community, about how many do you think lack skills in basic reading and writing that they need for jobs and everyday living?
2. How about Illinois as a whole? About how many adults do you think lack skills in basic reading and writing that they need for jobs and everyday living?
3. Do you know of any programs in your community that provide basic education in reading and writing skills for adults?
4. From what you know of these programs, do you think they provide the basic skills in reading and writing that these people need?
5. Do you know of any programs in your own community that provide basic instruction in English as a second language for non-English speaking adults?
6. From what you know of these programs, do you think they provide the basic skills in English that these people need?
7. Do you think the government should provide funding for programs in reading and writing skills to adults who do not have these skills?
8. Who do you think should fund these programs?
9. Do you think the government should provide funding for programs in English as a second language to adults who do not have these skills?
10. Who do you think should fund these programs?
11. Adults who need to learn basic reading and writing or English as a second language often face problems with going back to school. I'll read you a list of possible problems, and for each one, please tell me if you think it is generally a serious problem, a minor problem, or not much of a problem for these people.
    a. Is cost of going back to school a problem?
    b. Is transportation to classes a problem?
    c. Is child care a problem?
    d. Is the time classes are held a problem?
    e. Is the location of classes a problem?
    f. Are learning difficulties a problem?

Appendix 2-3

Student Focus Groups

Aurora East High School—Aurora

Belleville Area College (3 groups)—Belleville

Black Hawk College—Moline

Danville Area Community College—Danville

Elgin Community College—Elgin

Five-County Regional Office of Education (4 groups)—Ullin

Wm. Rainey Harper College—Palatine

Illinois Central College—East Peoria

Illinois Eastern Community Colleges/Frontier—Fairfield

Lake Forest High School—Lake Forest

McHenry County College—Crystal Lake

Midwest Women's Center—Chicago

Moraine Valley Community—Palos Hills

Murphysboro High School—Murphysboro

Peoria Board of Education—Peoria

Rockford Public Schools (3 groups)—Rockford

SIUC Evaluation & Development Center (3 groups)—Carbondale

South Suburban College (4 groups)—South Holland

St. Clair County Regional Office of Education (4 groups)—Belleville

Township High School District 214—Arlington Heights

Triton College (2 groups)—River Grove

Urbana Adult Education Center (6 groups)—Urbana

Venice-Lincoln Technical Center (5 groups)—Venice

Appendix 2-4

Program Staff/Other Professionals Focus Groups Locations

Conferences and Meetings

Southern Illinois Adult Education Service Center Fall Conference, Collinsville

Central Illinois Adult Education Service Center Fall Conference, Moline

Northern Illlinois Adult Education Service Center Fall Conference, Rosemont

South Suburban Community College Adult Education Area Planning Council, South Holland

Adult Education Programs

Aurora East High School District #131, Aurora

Belleville Area College, Belleville (2 groups)

Five-County Regional Office of Education, Ullin

Murphysboro High School, Murphysboro

St. Clair County Regional Office of Education, Belleville

South Suburban Community College, South Holland

Venice-Lincoln Technical Center, Venice

Appendix 2-5

Agencies/Associations

State and regional agencies and professional organizations responded to the same four questions as other respondents. In addition, they answered a fifth question which addressed the issue of coordination among agencies:

5. "Are there any ways that agencies could work together more effectively to bring needed services to those adults who didn't finish high school or adults for whom English is their second language?"

Beneath each listed agency is the number of individuals at the agency who gave input to the Task Force if the number was reported.

Illinois Association of Housing Authorities (1 person)

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (3 people)

Illinois Association of School Boards (Focus Group: 12 people)

Illinois Community College Board

Illinois Council of Vocational Education (1 person)

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (1 person)

Illinois Department of Corrections (3 people)

Illinois Department of Public Aid (35 people)

Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services (5 people)

Illinois State Bar Association (1 person)

Illinois State Board of Education
Adult and Literacy Section (Focus Group: 10 people)

Illinois State Board of Education
Early Childhood Section

Marion, Clinton, Washington Counties Regional
Vocation Education Delivery System (2 people)

Appendix 2-6

Policy Makers and Employers

Representatives	Interviewer
Rep. Jay Hoffman 112th District	Patricia Hunsaker
Rep. Gerald Hawkins 115th District	Larry White
Rep. Ron Stephens 110th District	Martha Giordano
Rep. Dave Leitch 93rd District	Colleen Dries
Rep. Don Saltsman 92nd District	Colleen Dries
Rep. David D. Phelps 118th District	Larry White
Rep. Doug Hoeft 66th District	Scott Ebaugh
Rep. Terry Deering 116th District	Shari Crockett
Senators	
Sen. Steve Rauschenburger 33rd District	Scott Ebaugh
Sen John W. Maitland 44th District	Joyce Fritsch
Sen. Evelyn Bowles 56th District	Martha Giordano
Sen. Frank Watson 55th District	Patricia Hunsaker
Candidate	
Mr. Robert Daiber 110th Legislative District	Martha Giordano
Mr. Ray LaHood 18th Congressional Seat	Colleen Dries

Local Elected Officials	Interviewer
Mr. D.L. Robinson, Superintendent McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education Bloomington	Joyce Fritsch
Mayor Greg Jones Buncombe	Larry White
Mayor Wilson Cairo	Larry White
Mr. Clarence Russell, Deputy Court Administrator Massac County	Nancy Tammen
Sheriff Robin Dillon Union County	Larry White
Camille M. Gibson, Councilman At-Large Peoria	Colleen Dries
Mr. Jim Thomas, Peoria County Board Member Peoria	Pat Pope
Mayor Don Williams Pekin	Pat Pope
Mayor Paul Gage Vienna	Shirley Elkins
Mayor Robert Morton O'Fallon	Martha Giordano
Robert Haida St. Clair County States Attorney Belleville	Patricia Hunsaker
Mayor Tom Carper Macomb	Susan A. Williams
Ms. Paula Mark Shawnee Development Union County	Larry White
Mayor Robert Towse Alton	Valorie Harris

Employers	Interviewer
Ms. Sara Ahten, Director of Marketing & Business Development Orthopedic Institute of IL Peoria	Pat Pope
Ms. Sharon Silver Dir. of Human Resources St. Elizabeth's Hospital Belleville	Martha Giordano
Mr. William Badgley CEO, Magna Bank Belleville	Patricia Hunsaker
Mr. Bruce Chesin, Manager Holiday Inn Harvey Harvey	Dr. Gloria Taylor
Cathy Aronhalt Komatsu Dresser Human Resources Peoria	Colleen Dries
Dr. W. T. Markus Matteson	Dr. Gloria Taylor
Mr. Jim Maholich Executive Vice President River Bend Growth Assoc Godfrey	Valorie Harris

Appendix 2-7

Center of Governmental Studies
Public Opinion Laboratory
Northern Illinois University

Dr. William McCready, Director
Dr. Janet McConeghy, Associate Director

The laboratory has been in operation since 1984 and completes approximately 60 state and national surveys annually for non-profit organizations and other universities as well as for businesses. The questions regarding adult education were a portion of the 1994 Illinois Policy Survey.

Belleville Area College
2500 Carlyle Road
Belleville, IL 62221

Address Return Requested

Non-profit
organization
U.S. postage
PAID
Permit No. 377
Belleville, IL

45

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Adult Basic Education in Illinois: Perceptions from Stakeholders and the Public is a production of the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association, Inc. Correspondence can be sent to Martha Giordano, Editor; Adult Education Dept; Belleville Area College; 2500 Carlyle Avenue; Belleville, IL 62221. e-mail: mgiordano@aol.com.

46